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30 January 1970

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

FROM : Aleks Kurgvel

SUBJECT: Financial Problems Connected with
Enforced Retirement

1. Due to my age, the news of my enforced retirement in 1970 stunned me. Up to this time I had been advised that I could go on working without any age limit as long as I remained able to do the required work. Fortunately, I have enjoyed good health and I have earned my supervisor's full satisfaction.

2. The enforced retirement puts me into a very bad financial situation. As an Estonian officer who worked with the Germans against the Communists during World War II, I was entitled to a German military pension. I did not take it simply because it would not be appropriate for me to do so while serving the U. S. Government in a sensitive position. It is too late for this now.

3. During the first decade of my employment with the Agency, which started in September 1951, I could not save any money. I started on a very low salary because I did not ask for more than was offered. I had to live separated from my family because my work required this. Nobody paid me any separation pay. My wife's and my salaries hardly covered the expenses of our separate households, of my commuting between Washington and New York, and of the education of our sons through college.

4. Finally, in 1963, we were able to buy a small house in New York. There is still a loan of approximately \$12,000 on the house. We were hoping that we would pay it off provided that both of us would be permitted to work as long as our health allowed. This is not the case now.

5. In my early contracts with the Agency, it was stipulated that Civil Service retirement coverage would be extended retroactively over the entire period of my service with the Agency, if I were ever included under Civil Service. The latter happened in December 1967. However, if this now cannot be done under a reasonable financial settlement, then the possibilities of arranging a pension on the basis of my service in the Estonian Army from 1923 up to 1940 should be

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studied. My last position there was that of Chief of a Section, simultaneously Deputy Chief of Military Intelligence. This was a lieutenant colonel's position.

6. Taking the following points under consideration:

a. That I was recruited and brought to this country under a special arrangement, for the specific purpose of working secretly as an Estonian officer;

b. That I accepted this job on the explicit advice of the late Mr. A. Rei, the head of the Government of the Republic of Estonia;

c. That there is a consular agreement between the United States and Estonia concerning the reciprocal use of army officers during wartime. The agreement is still in force, the United States is involved in a war and Estonia is still occupied by an invader;

d. That my work with the Agency had to be carried out under the cover of the Department of the Army;

e. That at the appropriate time the disclosure of my service as an Estonian officer was not in the interest of the security of the operations;

f. That the Agency fully benefitted from my experiences acquired during my service in the Estonian Army and the ensuing periods of my work with the German, Finnish and British military intelligence services--

the arrangements for a military pension could be made now retroactively, in connection with my retirement, without any undue publicity. The arrangement should be done in accordance with my pay in the Estonian Army. Those years of my service with the Agency during which no Social Security payments were made, should be added to the years of my service in the Estonian Army, if not recompensed in some other way. Such a settlement would enable me, after more than 18 years of sensitive service with the U. S. Government, to go on carrying the responsibilities emanating from this service and continuing them into my retirement. Since I have lived and worked for the entire period strictly under Department of Army cover, this settlement would be the best solution from the security point of view.

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7. In view of the bad publicity that the court proceedings of HEINE versus RAUS and CIA have received in the American and Estonian press, it would not be advisable to disclose my true connections after my retirement. This would be good neither for the Agency nor for me.

8. This settlement would not create a precedent because there are no other Estonian officers in the service of the United States who have worked in similar conditions.

9. I hope that the Agency will find proper ways and channels to solve this problem favorably and quickly.

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